



(W22) WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP - A USER-LED DAY SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH MS IN NORFOLK, UK

LAMS (Life & MS) is an independent Day Centre that was set-up and is run by people with MS in North Norfolk, East Anglia.

This followed the closure of a National Health Service (NHS) Neurological Day Centre which was hospital based. This closure resulted in people with MS, and their families, feeling unsupported.

The Centre currently offers: group physiotherapy; aromatherapy massage; access to the neurological specialist nurse; welfare advice; information on MS and symptom management; arts and crafts; and social activities (quizzes, games, etc.).

There are two agency caregivers at the Centre. This means that anyone can attend LAMS, however high their care-needs, and ensures that unpaid caregivers at home have at least one day off a week. Transport to LAMS is available for a minimal cost.

LAMS is supported by the NHS Primary Care Trust who provide the physiotherapy and specialist nurse, and also Social Services who successfully applied for a Carers Grant which funds the agency caregivers. LAMS is supported by the MS Society. It has proved to be a valuable and cost-effective use of resources.

LAMS has been running now for 3 years and is self-supporting. Members pay a weekly subscription, which promotes ownership. An elected management team (all people with MS) make decisions on running the Centre, and a 'Buddy System' operates for when MS symptoms make it difficult for these members to carry out their duties.

I would like to share with other health workers my experience in helping set-up LAMS, and the benefits this Day Centre offers, not only to the service-users, but also to their caregivers, and to everyone working with people with MS.

Lynda Hind
Neurological Specialist Nurse
Kelling Hospital
Holt, Norfolk NR25 6QA
United Kingdom